

Mystery Shopping Beginner E-Guide

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Introduction

Mystery shopping is a key service that is vitally needed. But, is this the right business for you to get into? Although there are many people that think that mystery shopping is somehow a scam, it is actually a very real and very profitable way to do the thing that you love the most: shop. Yet, because this is not necessarily a job but a business!

There is one trick of the trade that you should know about. That is that just about all that you need to do and learn can be found right on the web. You will learn just about everything that you need right here at ShoppingJobs.net!

In fact, our members receive all of the necessary tricks and tips to get started earning a very good salary right from the start, Including approved top paying companies.

Mystery shopping is a very real business and one that is fundamentally responsible for many of the decisions that a business will make in their customer service programs.

Remember that this is not about a power trip, nor is it about you correcting things that you do not like about the company. Rather it is about determining if the individual or business is doing just what the company wants them to do. In other words, one of the most essential things for you to keep track of is that you need to keep your personal aspects out of your business.

Finally, remember that mystery shopping is a business that you are creating. Therefore, take it quite seriously. Make sure to fulfill what your client wants from you and insure that you are always the most polite and hardworking consultant that they have. When you can gain their respect and their admiration, you can and you will make a business that is profitable out of mystery shopping.

Chapter 1: What Is Mystery Shopping?

The first thing that you need to take into consideration in regards to mystery shopping is just what is it? There are many people that mistakenly believe that mystery shopping is nothing more than going into a store or a restaurant and getting paid to shop or eat there. While this is true, there is much more work to it. If you will be making a business out of mystery shopping and you want to make a decent amount of income off of it, there are certain things that you should keep in mind before getting started.

Why Is It Done?

The first thing to take into consideration is why mystery shopping is done. Since you are soon to be a business owner, you can understand this. If you were to be in your place of business all of the time, everyone that worked for you would do their job 100% of the time right. But, what if you could not be there all of the hours that it was open? What if your business got so large that you opened other locations?

The problem is that even those that you trust and put in charge may not do their job as well as you would want them to. Therefore, as a mystery shopper, it is your job to see if those that are running the business are doing so as the owner of the business would like them to.

If that sounds difficult, it does not have to be. But, before you head out for your first mystery shopping experience, it is essential to realize what is at stake here.

What Happens To What I Report?

Once you begin to mystery shop, you will be required to enter locations, take note of specific things and then be required to report back to the company about what you saw, heard and experienced there. This information is very important to those that are running the business. In a sense, you are the eyes and the ears of the company from a customer's point of view. Therefore, they take what you have to say very seriously.

In some businesses, employees receive additional benefits including prizes or bonuses if in fact they do well based on what the mystery shopper says about them. In other cases, the business owner may punish or subject some sort of negative feedback to the employee that does not do well with his or her shop. But, this should not discourage you from reporting the facts.

In effect, you will not be doing your job or building your mystery shopping business if you do not provide just the facts.

Just the Facts

One of the biggest mistakes new mystery shoppers make that leads them to not getting their business up and running well is not sticking to the facts. The problem is that the guidelines for the mystery shop that you are doing are going to be set in stone. That is, they have laid the foundation for the mystery shop. If you are to work with them, you need to take those guidelines, follow them to the T and then report back in the proper manner.

If you use opinion rather than fact, you will not get many shops from this time forward. Here is why.

If you are to enter a location and determine if the location is clean and you answer with, "Although the floors were clean and free from debris, I did not find the promotional material to be beneficial to my tastes." This is in fact an opinion statement and not effective, beneficial, or worth their money to pay you.

Instead, what you should say is something like, "The floors in the location

were clean and free from debris. I noticed the promotional material for this month's sale hanging neatly. The windows were clean and smudge free around the materials hanging there." This is all fact and has nothing to do with what you think, rather just what is there.

In some cases, the mystery shopping companies will ask you to put in your opinion and then it is just find and even a very important part of the process. But, also insure that this is what they are asking before you get started.

Why Mystery Shopping Is Vitally Important

Mystery shopping is fast becoming the way that people get raises, the way they are recognized and the way in which a company gears its next promotion, its customer service needs and even the way that they will spend their profits. Seeing things from the customer's point of view is, in short, vitally important to the well being of the company.

If you are creating a business in which you will be doing mystery shopping for various companies, you will want to insure that your standards are just as high as those that the mystery shopping company is looking for in its people. We will get into what things you should and should not do when it comes to mystery shopping in just a bit. But, what you need to know is that this is a serious job and it can be quite a profitably business if you invest your time, energy and dedication into it.

Mystery shopping is sure to be around for many years to come. The company that is looking to invest in hiring people to pose as customers is one company that will be better able to see what the customer sees. Add odd times of the day or night, when the new guy is working or when there is a large rush, they can see just what their customers see and experience.

Here are some things that a mystery shopper will help a business owner to decide based on his or her report about their experience during the mystery

shop.

- Did they wait long?
- Did my customers have good service or were the employees rude to them?
- Did my business look good when the customer came in?
- Did we land the sale or did the customer go else where to get it?
- Did my employee follow all of my rules, my policies and did he do his job to the best of his abilities?
- What can my company do better to impress that customer?
- Do I need to use a customer satisfaction program to enhance the way that my employees treat my customers?
- What are my customer's thinking, feeling, seeing and experiencing when they enter?
- Does this employee deserve a raise or promotion?
- Is this store the store that does the best because of its location or because it has great customer service?
- Would I want to be a customer in that store?

All of these things and many more are the foundation of what makes up mystery shopping. In turn, if you plan to be a successful business owner with a mystery shopping business, then it is vitally important for you to invest the time and the skills necessary in making sure that what you see and do allows the business to make these types of decisions.

Now that you know what mystery shopping is, you can begin to create a business for yourself from it. We'll show you how.

Chapter 2: Can I Really Make Money With Mystery Shopping?

One of the biggest misconceptions about mystery shopping is that you can not make any real money at it. There are several things that people think about when it comes to mystery shopping.

- They may think that it is fake, somehow not a real business to build.
- They do not realize that mystery shopping is a very important and not just a fun thing to do. It is crucial to the development of a business and therefore should be taken as such.

If you do what you need to do, do it correctly, and do it often, you will make the money that you set out to make with mystery shopping. The costs are minimal and the benefits are really amazing.

How You Make Money

The question is then, "How do I make money at mystery shopping?" To help you to understand this, let's sum it up here first for you.

As far as how you will be paid, this is another question that often comes up; each mystery shop company does something a bit different. You will find those that cut a check to you each month and mail it out.

Some will provide for automatic payments into your checking account or savings account. Still others will pay through Paypal. Many of the mystery shop companies will only use one method of payment. Therefore, if you can not use that method, they may not allow you to work with them.

How Much Will I Make?

The big question that just about everyone wants an answer to is just how much money is out there to be made? There are several factors that play a role in this number as well as in how capable you will be to getting the shops that you would like to have. Here are some things that come into play here.

- Some shops will pay you what is called a shop fee. This fee is the amount that they are willing to provide to someone that does the mystery shop for them. It ranges greatly, but you should always learn how much a mystery shop will pay you before you agree to do it.
- Some shops will have a reimbursement. For example, if you are doing a restaurant shop, you may be reimbursed for the meal up to a certain dollar amount. Now, some of these shops also provide a shop fee while others are just reimbursement for what you spent, but you get a meal out of it as your payment.
- Sometimes, mystery shopping companies can not get enough people in specific areas to do the shops and they end up placing a bonus onto the shop. This means that the mystery shop needs to be completed fast, needs to be done without flaw and often needs to be insured it will be completed. If and when you do these things, you get the extra amount, or bonus, for the shop.

The one rule of thumb to go by, no matter what the shop is, is to know what the exact amount you will be paid for the shop before doing so. That is, you need to read through the paperwork and the details of the shop before saying you will perform it. If you do not do this, you will find yourself facing anything but what you thought. Always learn what you will be paid, how you will be paid and when you will be paid before saying yes to the job.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.shoppingjobs.net>

Chapter 3: Is Mystery Shopping The Right Business For You?

Mystery shopping is a solid business but that does not mean it is right for everyone that is considering it. Is it right for you? You are sure to learn this more so as you read through this e-book, but it helps to know up front what is required as well as what to expect from a business before stepping into it.

Are You Qualified?

The first thing that needs to be considered is if you are qualified to be a mystery shopper. Let's face it. Not everyone has what it takes to do the jobs that a mystery shopper will need to do. While every mystery shop is different, and it is sure to need different characteristics than the next shop, there are some qualifications that extend to just about every type of shop that you are likely to perform.

Here are some of those qualifications to determine if you have and can provide to have a mystery shopping business.

1. **Detail Oriented.** One of the foundations in mystery shopping is providing a great deal of detail during the shop. You will need to remember things such as the color of the employee's hair, the clothing that they were wearing, where the debris is located in the parking lot and more. On top of that, you will need to be able to notice these things without being told to do so. You'll have to look at the area and be able to remember it when entering your mystery shop online.
2. **Capable Of Staying Under Cover.** We will give you more tips about this later on in the e book but what you need to know is that you will need to stay under cover during your mystery shop. If they have any

idea that you are a mystery shopper, you will not be paid for your shop.

3. **Capable Of Conversing.** Many mystery shops will be conducted in such a way as you will need to relate to the sales person. You will need to go in, talk to them, ask them questions and get to the point where they are asking you for the sale of the item. You will need to be able to naturally talk to these individuals to insure that you are able to do this as a customer would.
4. **Responsible And Trustworthy.** Most mystery shops have a specific day and time that they need to be done. If you say that you will perform the shop at that time, you will need to do so. Otherwise, the shop can not be performed as the company requests and the end result is that the company does not get what they want and therefore will not pay for it. If you take on a job, do it as directed. One tip here, mystery shopping companies will not assign more shops to those that do not do as they say they will.

Things To Think About

Do you have the time necessary to mystery shop? You will need to be as flexible as possible with your mystery shopping business. As mentioned, mystery shops have to happen at specific times and days. If you are to accept them, you must have the time available to do so. This includes time to drive to the shop, complete it, drive home and input the shop into the system.

Do you have children? Some mystery shops will allow and even encourage parents to bring children along for it! Others, on the other hand, forbid it. If you have kids, you will need this to be met.

Of course, mystery shopping is something that is different from one company to the next. That means that what happens for one is not the same for the next. Some mystery shopping companies offer a bit more flexibility than others do. You will be able to learn what the requirements for any shop are

long before you decide to take it on, though.

Making Your Job Better

If you are to start a mystery shopping business, you will want to insure that it is something that you like to do. Do you like to shop? If you enjoy shopping in such a way as you are willing to learn about the company as well as about the employee, it may work. If you hate to eat out, then you may be restricted here. If you hate to talk to people in a sales situation (i.e. you hate salesmen) this is not the job for you.

In addition, you should realize that you are simply at the mystery shop to determine if in fact they are doing what the company requires. You will answer questions about what was provided and to be blunt, your opinion is not as important as the actual facts. You won't be changing the company noticeably by doing mystery shops, but you will help them to develop a good business from the start.

Chapter 4: Tips and Tricks To Mystery Shopping Business Success

You now have most of what you need to succeed at getting started with your mystery shopping business. In this chapter, you will learn how to keep your business growing and prospering well into the future.

The fact is that mystery shopping is a true method of a company getting a first hand look at how their employees have treated the customer that is all important to their business. Without them, their doors would be closed, for good. Therefore, you can and you should build a mystery shopping business that propels you into making the amount of money that you want to make as well as helps you to succeed with your life on other counts.

Here, we will talk about the things that you need to do not to get started in mystery shopping, but how to maintain a good business throughout your

days doing it.

Honesty and Flexibility

Being honest with yourself as well as with your clients is a crucial step in the process of having a successful mystery shopping business. You need to insure that you do not take on what you can not do. You need to develop a relationship with your business associates, meaning the mystery shopping companies, in such a way as they know that if they give you a shop that it will come back being perfect for them. Doing your best 100% of the time is necessary so do not promise more than you can or will do.

Being flexible is also a very important aspect. Although you may not like sports, you may need to do a few mystery shops at local sports shops. You may not like to drink alcohol, but you are limited to shops that do not require this, then. The more flexible you can be, the more shops you will qualify for and therefore be able to obtain. Being flexible with the times that you can mystery shop for the companies is also helpful. Some may require those late night visits. Some may be middle of the day shops. The more flexibility you can give, the better it will be for your business.

Bookkeeping

As with any type of business, you will need to do a bit of bookkeeping. You will need to know how much you are owed, how much you have been paid and follow up with clients that do not pay you for some reason. Make sure that you have a Paypal account set up to allow you to receive funds from those companies that only pay in this manner. Make sure that you are keeping track and marking off when you are paid.

In addition to this, you should install a method of keeping track of your necessary receipts and notes. Get a file box and place a folder inside for each month of the year. During that month, place all of your receipts and

notes into the file. When you get back to that month, you can either store them away in a sealed envelope or you can toss them out. This way, if you need to go back to them for any reason, you can do so easily.

Family Life

One thing that is difficult as far as mystery shopping goes is family life. There is no doubt that you will need to do a balancing act here. You will need to insure that your family life is not jeopardized by all of the running around you will need to do. In some cases, your family will be okay to take with you, especially on dinner style shops. Yet, it still can be a bit tricky to handle all that you have to do.

Like any other business, you will need to set your hours and stick to them. If you need to go outside of those hours to meet your clients needs, you do so as it fits with your family and your priorities. Is it okay to do so? That is a personal question for you. But, here are some tips nevertheless.

- Give yourself work hours and stick with them. That means blocking out all of those interruptions when you are trying to work at home too.
- Take the time necessary to handle family life and crisis as you need to. Emailing or calling on schedulers often will allow you to get the extra time you need to complete a shop. As long as this is only done in emergency types of situations, you should be completely capable of getting some flexibility unless they are rush shops.
- Give yourself days off too. Overwhelming yourself with your mystery shopping business will not be good for it. Keep things in perspective of what your life goals are.

Handling the Expenses

We told you there are not many expenses that have to go with starting your mystery shopping business, but there are some things to take note of.

- Keep your receipts as help in tracking mileage that you have used on your vehicle to and from your mystery shopping adventures. In some areas and cases, you will be able to claim those miles on your vehicle for tax purposes.
- Likewise, other expenses may help to count towards this as well. This may include purchases of paper products, fax costs, even fuel costs may count. To make sure you are handling your financial aspects of mystery shopping business correctly, hire on a tax person to help you to make these decisions wisely.
- Keep track of what you put into the mystery shop and what you get out. You may find that investing your money into a product that you do not want is not worthwhile if you only are reimbursed for that purchase. Determine which shops you will do based on how well it will fit within your needs and expenses.

Managing Your Business

You will want to manage your business in such a way as to provide for the very best service possible. You are working for yourself here and creating a business that is all yours. Therefore, conducting yourself in the proper way is always going to be necessary.

- Network with other mystery shoppers out there. Learn from them.
- Remember this very important rule: Absolutely never tell anyone which company shops which locations. NEVER! You can actually lose your contracts with those mystery shopping companies if you are caught doing this. It is confidential information only for you to learn. Company names should never be supplied to anyone else.

- Learn from mistakes and do a better job next time. Being new means making mistakes. But, making the same mistakes over and over is grounds for losing your clients.
- Give yourself the opportunity to succeed and to do well each day that you are working.

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